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Tuesday, May 24, 2011

## County Redistricting...Ulterior Motives?

Last night, the County Ledge voted to approve the new district lines which were mightily opposed by those believing that another minority district could be attained and those supporting the Hill Town claims of the lines creating a community divisiveness. As we left the Cahill Room amongst the grumbles accusing the "draw-ers" of the new lines as being prejudiced and the "same old, same old," I wondered if these single issue citizens understood the process enough to know that this is NOT the last stand for their opinion.

And, I hesitate explaining it to them as I believe the new lines are drawn in the most fair way they can be drawn.

Remember the short lived Albany Chicken battle. I say short lived as the Chicken folks got to celebrate for 10 days before the legislation, which had narrowly passed the Common Council, was vetoed by the Mayor on day 10. Remember, folks, the County Executive has a full 10 days to veto Local Law C and he doesn't have many friends on the County Legislature to keep happy. The Ledge does not have a friend in the CE's office.

Now, within the 10 days, the County Executive must hold his own public hearing on the Redistricting Lines...there's another chance for the citizens to convince a decision maker. Now, I believe if the lines are vetoed, that would probably necessitate the ledge running on the old lines as new lines could not be drawn in time. (Just a guess based on input from counsel...could go off into the judicial abyss.) The only problem is, the percentages are so far off on the current district lines, the County, if they chose to run on those lines, could be in violation of federal law.

Now, while we don't do many things logically in Albany County, logically, if the new lines are adopted the Committee representatives would need to be reallocated along with the new lines which would change the faces in every single district committee. It's not a hard thing to do, ya just have your meeting in a different place with a different leader. So, unless a candidate is running for a County-wide seat, let's say, a County Legislative seat, that candidate could only be endorsed by the votes representing the EDs within their new District.

Since Ms. Willingham rushed through her own endorsement last weekend, it stands to reason that she might take issue with a vote to change the configuration of her district. Ya see, Mr. Commisso was not



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While I love campaigns and I love my judges, the judicial race for Surrogate Court in Albany wasn't on

the only legislator to play politics on the emotions of a misled minority community (Commisso used the wails of Wanda to grab more attention to his ethically challenged flip flop.) Ms. Willingham, up for an academy award for her performance last night, would lose her endorsement if the new lines are adopted.

Remember a couple of months ago when Willingham begged the Legislature to approve the sale of 276 First Street to her sex offender housing friend, Mala Khan, for siting in the middle of a "residential" area of her district. Is this the act of someone concerned with the citizens in that district? I think not. Perhaps that's why Willingham requested, and momentarily got, that three (or so) block area in which that sex offender house would have been located as well as the area in which her primary opponent lives, removed from her Legislative District. Funny, I bet she would have been singing a different song last night had the overnight change she tricked the Commission into performing had not been uncovered.

My dear minority community, I'm on your side here. You have been, and will continue to be, used unless you start thinking for yourselves. Every four years, or 10, when you start getting phone calls from your long lost leadership, something's up. You are being used. Were those phone calls coming in when your legislator insisted that you wanted another group home operated by Mala Khan in your neighborhood? Again, I think not.

The legislature is comfortable working in the dark and they will as long as you permit them that luxury. Last night, I attended a caucus which was probably the first contentious caucus anyone other than a legislator was permitted to attend. Why? They don't want anyone to see what really happens, they want you to see only what is presented you...all shiny and new and slanted enough to enrage you. The "option" of going into executive session was hotly contested in the hall as the rest of us were locked in a conference room, Mr. Commisso and Mr. Scavo did not get their way and the meeting was permitted open to the audience. (Actually, Scavo was quickly removed from the hall dispute.)

While I don't like the theatrics presented in the caucus...and I don't like the flagrant lies tossed about in the caucus (she knows who she is) I do appreciate that the discussion was had in public and I have hope that this will continue into the future. I, along with most other citizens, am a lot more tolerant of questionable activities when they don't happened behind my back.

Posted by albanycitizenone at 11:27 AM

Reactions: funny (0) interesting (10) cool (0)

0 comments:

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